GHS

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Oakland High School Basketball Team, 1914
Real Photo Postcard (RPPC)

Reflections
Jeffrey Hunt
August 23 2025

This photograph shows the Oakland High School basketball team from the 1914–1915 season, all six of them, seated on the steps outside a school building in Oakland, Oregon. The image was printed in reverse, as revealed by the backwards lettering on the ball ("OHS 1914–15"), and it was developed from an extremely dirty negative. You can still see the embedded dust, scratches, and what might even be a tiny spider preserved near the lower right edge if you zoom in. The film processing was possibly done quickly in a "locker room," or more likely in a home darkroom—hastily and without close attention to detail.

There's a strong possibility that the young man seated far left is a member of the Dear family. Based on age and appearance, it seems likely to be either Edward Dear (born 1895, age 19 at the time) or William Dear (born 1900, age 14). I believe we can safely narrow it to those two. Additional comparison with known portraits should allow a confident identification. Wally Dunsmoor may also be able to confirm it.

The early-morning light casts long shadows across the brick wall and concrete, and one of the more charming details of this photo is the double silhouette of the boys on the left against the building—likely captured on a cold autumn morning. While this image required extensive restoration, it remains visually compelling. I hope it will be of use to others—perhaps for the Oakland or Douglas County Museums—and serve as a lasting record of the youth and community spirit of the time.

Just look at those shoes—can you imagine playing basketball flopping around in those? That must have taken real fortitude and endurance.

Real Photo Postcard (RPPC) printed on AZO photographic paper with four upward-pointing triangles in the stamp box, dating the paper stock to between 1904 and 1918. The divided back indicates it was intended for both correspondence and address, typical of RPPCs from this era.

1914-15
OHS

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The image with corrected orientation.

POST CARD

PLACE STAMP HERE

CORRESPONDENCE HERE

NAME AND ADDRESS HERE